Successor to The Companion 2 v.

THE OBSERVER,

AND REPERTORY OF ORIGINAL AND SELECTED ESSAYS, IN VERSE & PROSE, ON TOPICS OF POLITE LITERATURE, &c.

The friend of Socrates, the friend of Plato,
But above all, the friend of truth.

Vol. I. *Baltimore, Saturday, November* 29, 1806. *No.* 1.

PROSPECTUS.

We avail ourselves of the opportunity which the completion of the second volume of the Companion presents, to announce to the public some changes which are projected in the work.

The most patriotic and disinterested motives had prompted the late Editor to undertake the direction of that paper, but as the time and attention it required were incompatible with his professional pursuits, he found it necessary to engage an associate in his literary labours, and to this associate he has ultimately deemed it proper to relinquish the whole management of the work.

The present Proprietor has long felt the necessity of some alterations in the plan and management of the paper, in order to render it more generally acceptable.

Variety is the essence of amusement, hence we abandon the smooth and unbroken plain, however productive of the most useful harvests, to ramble amidst scenes, where nature exhibits her more varied, picturesque and fantastic forms. We find this quality eminently essential in a periodical paper...the repeated failure of works of this nature where the plan on which they have been conducted, has confined them merely to literary subjects, sufficiently proves that these alone will not interest the public.

To merit general attention, a publication of this kind must display a spirited versatility : it must treat by turns of morals, politics, and fashions ;

> Must move from grave to gay with ready art,
> Now play the sage's, now the trifler's part.

Having then resolved no longer to confine our fellow labourers within the limits prescribed by the regulations of the Compa-

nion, we will more particularly indicate those topics, to which we would wish to direct the attention of writers, and with which we shall endeavour to amuse readers.

ESSAYS ON MEN AND MANNERS,

After the manner of our accomplished predecessors, Johnson and Addison, shall claim a large portion of our attention. But however short we may come of the majestic march of the one, and in vain sigh for the unaffected simplicity of the other, we yet indulge a hope that we shall be able to produce something that may amuse the grave, and detain the idle. It would be superfluous here, to dwell upon the influence which these writers have had, in ameliorating manners, establishing the decencies of life, and forming a correct taste in literature. Many of the volatile and the frivolous, who were deterred from reading by the formidable appearance of a connected volume, were easily induced to peruse a desultory page. The effect was slow but it was certain. A great and commercial people, have become readers, chaste in manners and correct in criticism. The pleader has rejected the rugged idiom of technical language and ventured to *travel out of the record* to enliven his harangue by the brilliancy of metaphor. The divine has been enabled more impressively to fulfil the duties of his solemn vocation, by the new views of human nature which he has contemplated through the vista of Addison, or seen in the polished mirror of Mackenzie, whilst the merchant has closed his day-book, to *tattle* with Isaac Bickerstaff, or *ramble* with Dr. Johnson.

Every writer shall be judged with candour. We prohibit no style which is correct, no subject, that may be useful. The moralist shall occasionally assume the dictatorial chair, and endeavour to fortify the timid and determine the irresolute. The metaphysician shall spin his cob-webs, and the philosopher have a corner for his theories. Poetry may wing her daring flight to the double mountain, and even history clog the wings of time. In short, our essays shall attempt to indicate whatever is beautiful or deformed in society, and describe what is useless or valuable.

Whilst we shun any active exertions in the noisy field of political warfare: we invite our correspondents to exercise their talents, and disseminate their opinions on those great political questions which are alike important to all. The grand events daily occurring on the theatre of Europe, events at present so closely connected with all the operations of thought, wherever their influence reaches, afford matter for much interesting speculation,

and should by no means be prohibited in any paper presented to the public.

But it must be remembered, that whilst we loosen the trammels which have hitherto too strictly confined our views, we must not verge to the opposite extreme...the animosity of party spirit, must never contaminate our pages, nór indecent personalities, degrade the dignity of our work. From fair and liberal discussion proceed those bright emanations of truth, which irradiate and convince the mind ; but angry disputation, by strengthening the influence of prejudice and impeding the operations of reason, can only heighten the gloom, and perpetuate the reign of ignorance.

Of the various kinds of writing, perhaps no one is more generally pleasing and more extensively useful than

BIOGRAPHY.

The wonderful events and the sudden vicisitudes, which have happened to those who have attracted the envy and the admiration of the world, possess an interest in the minds of the inquisitive, superior to all the airy creations of the novelist.

There is a period of life at which reason assumes the reigns of imagination, and incidents however novel and striking, and with how much soever of skill they may be woven together, cease to charm, unless sanctioned by the seal of reality. It is then that the biographer enjoys his triumph. He leads his follower into the very innermost recesses of genius, and opens to his curious eye, the secret springs of human action. He conducts him through the classic shades of the Lyceum, that he may be exhilirated by the wit of Alcibiades, or instructed by the wisdom of Socrates : and Somnus is neglected whilst he sits up late with Woffington and the English orator, or beguiles the stillness of the midnight hour by sipping tea at the Crown and Mitre with Johnson and his faithful *Chronicler*. In short Biography is a study to which every reader is indebted for the amusement of many an hour, and its fascination is so powerful, that Pliny's opinion of History may be applied to it with equal truth : *It is always pleasing, write it as you will.*

CRITICISM

is of indispensible importance, in a work of this nature. The habit of comparing our language, with that of the great masters of style, is a discipline to which every student must submit who is emulous of fame in the art of composition. And if in perusing the remarks of a perspicacious critic, he should find his sentiments anticipated, let him regard it as auspicious, and continue his pursuit of the Olympic prize, with renewed ardour,

Criticism, in the well imagined allegory of one whose words are sweet like the Hyblean honey, was the eldest daughter of LABOUR AND TRUTH. She was at her birth committed to the care of JUSTICE and brought up by her in the palace of WISDOM. Being soon distinguished by the celestials for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed *Governess* of FANCY, and empowered *to beat time* to the chorus of the muses, when they sung before the throne of Jupiter.

The true path is here so distinctly indicated by this experienced writer, that no one can hesitate between the real and the pretended critic. That art must be valuable which is produced by labour and truth, fostered by justice, and protected by wisdom.

These are the three great topics which present themselves as of primary importance in a periodical publication : there are others which, though of minor value in themselves, yet should not be neglected.

We should consider accurate

REPORTS

of judicial decisions on important points, worthy of preservation, although they may not be interesting to the generality of readers. We have the promise of assistance in this department, from a gentleman, who will communicate such cases of moment as may occur in this city.

Such brief NOVELS or TALES as are recommended by purity of design and the fascination of incident, may be occasionally inserted. Thus shall we obey the precept of the poet, and join both profit and delight in one :

Simul et jucunda et idoned dicere vitæ.

LITERARY, PHILOSOPHICAL and AGRICULTURAL intelligence will be studiously sought and promptly given.

SKETCHES of TOURS by those who have journeyed through foreign countries and tarried amongst strange people, and like the hero of the Grecian bard, have attentively

Their manners noted and their states surveyed,

are a cheap mode of increasing knowledge without the inconvenience of travelling.

THE POETICAL DEPARTMENT,

we hope, will prove a hive of hoarded sweets, to those who delight in the brilliant tints of fancy. We shall invoke the *Arcades* both of native and foreign shores to attune their softest reeds and *with sweet novelty the taste amuse*.

We have now explained our idea of the manner in which we should desire to conduct our Miscellany, which will be henceforth presented under the title of the Observer—Of our own abilities to perform the task we have imposed upon ourselves, we must speak with the most unaffected diffidence—but of the talents and high attainments of our associates, and of those who have generously offered their aid, we may speak with no timid voice.

We engage in the toilsome and thorny path of editorial duty with hopes neither depressed by fear, nor elevated beyond the bounds of rational expectation. We will *never* condescend to prostitute our pen to degrading flattery for the purpose of obtaining *favour*. If we fail, we shall have at least the consoling and honourable reflection, of having aimed at our country's good—if our laudable and honest exertions obtain for us, the esteem of the worthy, and the sanction of the liberal and the enlightened, we shall move on in our glad career, animated with the delightful hope, that as time and experience mellow the powers of our mind, and science still opens her ample stores to our constant research, we may be found still more and more deserving of that patronage, which it will be our highest ambition to merit.

As the expences attending a periodical work are considerable, prudence forbids our engaging in the undertaking until the support extended to it, answers its expenditures. If 500 subscribers are obtained, we will commence the publication of the Observer on the first of January.

CONDITIONS.

THE OBSERVER shall be published every Saturday, on good Type and paper—each number to contain Sixteen Octavo pages, of which the present is a specimen.

Price to Subscribers, FIVE DOLLARS a year, payable half yearly in advance.

For the Observer.

THE LUCUBRATIONS OF
BENJAMIN BICKERSTAFF, ESQUIRE.

No. I.

Thy Name and Office deftly shew.

Shakspere.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,

I am so well pleased with the plan which you recently communicated to me, that I am resolved to assist you as far as I can without putting myself to any very great inconvenience. In considering how this aid might be furnished with the greatest advantage to you, and, at the same time with the least trouble to myself, I have formed the conclusion, that essays were my forte. These blessed little books in miniature do not require much toil, and they lay no very heavy tax upon the brain. We are not compelled to court the coy damsels of Helicon to smile upon our labours, for the Essayist should be blind to the glittering gleams of fancy. His business is with human nature as she actually presents herself to the ken of observation; and if he shut his eyes to the lights of experience, while he wanders amid the mazes of imagination, he holds a false "mirror up to nature," and is guilty of a violation of his duty.

The great Johnson is accused of nurturing the morbid discontent of the misanthropist, by the gloomy views of human nature which his Rambler presents. Others again have deceived the expectations of youth, which with deceitful flattery, had promised a world where every word was kindness and every look was a smile. Now either of those extremities may be injurious to society, although they may be justified by the peculiar circumstances of the individual, who, from the influences of particular causes, forms an unjust estimate. But they may be avoided by one who calmly looks around him, and surveys the daily operations of nature. With such feeling do I contemplate what I see; for the days of passion have rolled on, and the fervour of youth has passed away.

Therefore, my dear sir, if you will spare me an occasional corner, and do not fear a rival among the ladies, I am willing to commence my career as an Essayist. You and I will figure away in the same scene to the vast amusement and edification of the Baltimore fair.

That you may have a more familiar knowledge of the person who now courts your acquaintance, than you could have acquir-

ed from casual conversations, I proceed to give you a brief account of my name and family.

I belong to the ancient house of the Bickerstaffs ; being lineally descended from one of Isaac Bickerstaff's sisters ; the same Jenny, who, while a spinster, was accustomed, as her brother relates, "to sit with her nose full of snuff and a man's night-cap on her head, reading Novels and Romances." Thus you see, like some great man, whose name I have forgotten, and am just now too lazy to search for, I have the gift of wisdom and the privilege of garrulity by inheritance.

I think myself a *young* gentleman, or one at least as well qualified to attend a lady,as the generality of the foplings whom I now see simpering at a modern tea-table ; yet I confess I do occasionly overhear some who are not of the same age with myself, whispering..." he's a decayed old bachelor." But I strenuously contradict such reflection, and I can always prove my age by some good natured spinsters, with whom I have danced some thirty years ago, and therefore know I am not so old as people imagine. But even though the bloom of youth be passed I am still welcomed with smiles whenever I enter a female circle. The long habit of seeing me among them, has made me quite as necessary to the dear creatures as a glass of wine is to social intercourse, or a tale of scandal to a cup of imperial. I am so entirely inoffensive and unobtrusive in my manners that the beaux cannot hate me, although they sometimes regard the enviable confidence and familiarity with which I am treated, with uneasiness. I now seldom fall in love, for Cupid is tired of visiting me ; for these twenty years past, he has been striving to turn me over to Hymen, but I have always had the art to elude the snares that were prepared for my liberty. Ah, sir ! were I to relate to you the various attempts that have been made upon me by some who are mothers and grandmothers of little urchins that are now playing the same pranks,...were I to describe the dimpled smiles, the soft sighs, the tender ogles, and the confidential whispers that I resisted, you would believe me when I say that I have escaped a more dangerous ordeal than ever was invented in the days of superstition and ignorance. But, thanks to a good constitution and a stout heart, I have lived to this age, free from cares and troubles. Women, sir, I find to be the same in all ages. The same compliments which procured me the title of a fine gentleman from the mother, are now received with a simper of complacency from the daughter. You must not however consider me as averse from the bands of matrimony, for I assure you I shall enter into that holy state, as soon as I can meet with a suitable partner. But my misfortune has been that where I was pleased I was

rejected, and where the most flattering advances were made I was compelled to recede. I continue to hover among the gay, the idle, the beautiful and the sensible, because I do not yet despair of exchanging solitude for society, and my cat for a wife. At present however that affectionate animal is my sole companion, and when, in the sad moments which at times will visit the chamber of a recluse, I number the many years we haved lived together, I cannot avoid reflecting that a wife would not have suffered them to pass with such tranquility.

For the Observer.

SIR,

I promised you some time ago, to give you an account of the principal characters who figure at our bar. Avocations of a most imperious kind, and an unsettled state of health, but above all, a consciousness of inability, have hitherto held me silent, and indeed the engagement had passed entirely from my mind had it not been lately revived by an important contest between two of our most eminent lawyers. These gentlemen stand at the head of their profession in this place, and are together an epitome of all the most valuable talents that are exercised at the bar.

Mr.*** whose portrait I shall first delineate, is about the middle size, all his limbs perfectly well fashioned and compact, conveying an idea of activity and strength. Though fitted rather for strong muscular exertion than the soft and elegant movements of grace, his figure nevertheless has symmetry, and an elevated and well defined countenance bespeaks the firm and polished gentleman. At the bar Mr.*** is distinguished by a correct and perspicuous eloquence, aiming in his language more at neatness and precision than elegance and grace. Early habituated to close and systematic thinking, he has learned to hold but in secondary estimation, all those arts by which rhetoric entraps the heart and dazzles the fancy. More desirous of being a profound lawyer, than a fine pleader, his labours have, almost exclusively, been devoted to the investigation of truth, and her he seeks to recommend, by her own intrinsic loveliness. He is not however incapable of rising into a warm and impassioned strain of eloquence, and when the occasion demands and the subject admits it, he knows how to touch those fine and delicate chords of the heart, which vibrate in unison with pity and commiseration. Habits of early and extensive generalization have enabled him on all occasions to command a band of well marshalled ideas, and to trace, if I may be allowed the expression,

with the coup d'oeil of the philosopher, all those remote and complex ramifications, into which, from a few general and obvious principles, the science of jurisprudence is extended.....situated on an eminence, his eye surveys the whole circumference of the law, while the more limited and contracted views of his antagonists, only give them a glimpse of its various and complicated structure. Most men find little difficulty in forming their thoughts with sufficient accuracy and precision, but to comprehend under one abstract idea, a multiplicity of others less general, to mount to first principles ; and apply those principles again to the solution of combinations, however difficult and various, in the characteristic of genius, destined for the enlargement of human science and the promotion of human happiness. Nor is the learning of this gentleman confined merely to juridical topics. In this country, where science and public speaking open the way to honor and distinction, he early shone a bright and successful champion in the warfare of political debate. He is moreover a ripe and finished scholar in the departments of polite literature, and not unfrequently discovers an intimate acquaintance with all the finer and more delicate powers of the human mind. As an orator, his gesticulation has little variety, and a voice which practice ought to have mellowed, not unfrequently disgusts by the shrillness of its accents and the monotony of its tones. Had nature given him a fancy more vivid and prolific I should do him wrong to compare him with the greatest of our orators. As he is, I do not scruple to assign him a conspicuous place among the most illustrious ornaments of our country.

I shall now, sir, introduce to your acquaintance a genius of a very opposite cast, the rapidity and exuberance of whose fancy is perhaps unfavourable to that distinctness and definitiveness of idea which so eminently distinguishes his rival. Mr. ** has more harmony and modulation in his voice than Mr.*** and the celerity of his utterance seconding the promptitude and vivacity of his conception, he seems for a while to bear away the victory, did not the frequent interposition of the judge remind us that in the violence of his career he sometimes overleaps those nice and subtle distinctions the law is so jealous in preserving. In the science of jurisprudence, as in every other department of human learning, the mind must proceed by cautious and gradual advances to the developement of those foundations on which the whole fabric leans. Genius must animate it, and communicate to it all that suppleness and versatility which in a process so complex it is necessary it should have. But though imagination is requisite to furnish those intermediate ideas by which the logician links the remote

end of a demonstration with the primary and axiomatic truths of science, yet by the exquisiteness of its perceptions, it is too often prone to prefer the glittering apparitions of falsehood to the more solid, yet less specious forms of truth. So difficult is it in human nature to find a cool and steady judgment united with an ardent and excursive imagination. Never were these observations more strikingly illustrated than in the gentlemen, each of whose characters I have endeavoured to pourtray. I have seen these two champions enter the field together ; for a while the doubtful motion of their weapons, like the terrific gleams which Livy says flashed from the swords of the Curiatii and Horatii, suspended the decision of the combat, and harrowed up the feelings of their audience. Not a sound, not a breath was to be heard, nothing but the fury of the mighty combatants, struggling for the mastery. Mr. ** advancing, like a youthful hero elated by the ardor of his feelings, towering into the sublime of eloquence ; now glancing at the heart, now collecting all his force and bearing irresistibly forward, you would think he would lay his antagonist prostrate in the dust. His adversary, on the contrary, with the coolness and vigilance of a veteran and well disciplined warrior, received the fury of his first onset, places himself upon his guard and smiles to see youthful ardour & impetuosity wasting itself by its own exertions. At length, when fancy has done her part, when the heart has been tortured a thousand ways by the exquisiteness of its own feelings : then is the moment he commences the charge ; and with those powers he knows so well how to detect the fallacies of rhetoric, he touches the pivot of the controversy ; instantly the spell is struck, the bright enchantments of fancy fade away, and truth, rising in her heavenly and natural proportions, breaks upon the mind of the distracted and bewildered auditory. Eloquence, my dear sir, to be true must be bottomed on the honest feelings of the heart ; the embellishments of art and the rich exuberance of novel imagery may for a time give lustre and popularity to falshood, but that awful tribunal that frames its decisions by the standard of truth, will refuse a place in the temple of fame, to him who ascends its heights by the tricks of sophistry, or the rainbow colours of rhetoric.

For the Observer.

ON THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE FINE ARTS IN AMERICA.

NO. 1.

In some of the cities of New England, in New York, and Philadelphia, and, I do believe, in other of our large towns

it has lately been attempted to establish institutions for the encouragement of the fine arts....Whether any thing towards the actual establishment of an academy has been effected to the eastward, I am ignorant ; but in New York and Philadelphia, considerable sums have been expended in buildings, and in the purchase and importation of casts from the best statues of antiquity. In Philadelphia a large and expensive edifice has been erected to receive these casts, and to furnish the conveniences of study.

In the flourishing city of Baltimore, a city which in the short period of less than half a century has risen from *nothing* to the rank of the third city in the union, there is not yet heard a whisper which indicates among those who lead the taste and the fashion of the town, a desire that the fine arts...the arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting should be nurtured among us. And yet *" magnis voluisse sat est."...Juv :* We only wait the nod of our great men.

The first attempt to call the attention of our citizens to this point was made in a paper which has ceased to be published... *the Companion.* The communications of the Sylph, however important to the philosophy of the question, and correct as they were in their detail, embraced so large a range of discussion, and took so comprehensive a view of this extensive field, that it may not be amiss in a *mere mortal,* whose flight is much more bounded, to offer his contribution of opinion and fact, of calculation and reasoning on this subject, as far as it regards America, and our city in particular. For although many of our citizens may suppose that they are by no means interested in the introduction of a knowledge of the fine arts among us, and others look upon them as appendages of luxury and vice, yet every one pretends more or less to taste and judgment in painting, and especially in architecture : from the bricklayers and carpenters who plan and build our public and private buildings, to the fine lady who fills the house with brilliant company.

With very little leisure from the pursuits of a profession which occupies the principal part of my thoughts and time, I shall therefore venture to offer to my fellow citizens what occurs to me as worthy of consideration on the subject of the arts. My communications will probably be very irregular both to method and importance. With you, Mr. Editor, it rests in judge whether you will even admit into your paper, this first *missive* of one, on whose contributions as to their *time* and *length,* you cannot depend. At the present moment it is my intention to treat the subject very fully and very regularly,..,as far as

very moderate talents, taste, and information permit. A pressure of business may interrupt, as a period of leisure may forward these intentions. In the course of my remarks, I hope even to excite one or other of the *irritable* tribe of artists by profession, to dash the pen from my fingers, and substitute information, better founded on inspection and experience, in the place of the reveries of a mere American who has travelled. My great and almost only object is to rouse public attention to an object in which either the convenience, or the pleasure of most of us is interested. I have no objection to excite angry reply. I will thank any one who will abuse my papers in print...provided he do it in good earnest, and with ability, even if he should be deficient in politeness...I will try to give opportunities of reply, by telling civilly, but bluntly, all the disagreeable truths on the designs of our public buildings, and their decorations in sculpture and painting, which I honestly can ; and although my labours shall be particularly devoted to the benefit of my fellow-citizens of Baltimore, I will, while I am about it, now and then take an excursion for their satisfaction and comfort, and bring home my remarks on the proceedings of our sister cities in the arts.

At the same time, I shall never willingly injure any one by inconsiderate censure. I shall tread the tender ground of private buildings and private collections, fearfully and on tiptoe, and be still more cautious, how by any unfavourable criticism, I injure the reputation or interests of any living artist or mechanic. It may indeed sometimes happen that I shall borrow the house of a rich friend, to exhibit a specimen of bad taste or arrangement...or insinuate possibly that a man may be a very excellent and honest carpenter or mason, or possess a very large fortune, and yet be a most miserable and extravagant architect. With public exhibitions of art, I shall take still greater liberties, and if I am so fortunate as to provoke a defence, I shall attain my object, for the public will *listen* and *learn*.

B.

For the Observer.

We extract the following picture of humble happiness from the Memoirs of Marmontel, written by himself...we have seldom felt more interested than in the perusal of this charming work...it is a little tinctured with the garrulity of age ; but it is impossible not to be charmed with the simplicity of its style, and the vivacity with which the many living pictures it exhibits are drawn :

" I have already observed that, in my little town, the educa-

tion of boys was carefully conducted: their example became, to the girls an object of emulation. The instruction of the one influenced the spirit of the others; and gave to their air, their language, and their manners, a tint of politeness, of decorum, and of agreeableness, that nothing has made me forget. An innocent freedom reigned among us all: the girls and the young men used to walk together in an evening by the light of the moon. Their usual amusement was singing; and it seems to me that these young voices, united, used to form sweet harmony and charming concerts.'—'The connexions that were formed there did not at all disquiet our families: there was so little inequality of condition and fortune, that the parents were almost as soon agreed as their children; and after marriage, love did not often languish: but that, which was attended with no danger to my companions, might extinguish my emulation, and make the fruit of my studies abortive.

'I saw hearts choosing and forming ties with each other: example inspired me with a similar inclination. One of our young companions, and the prettiest to my taste, appeared to me still disengaged, and, like me, to have only the vague desire of pleasing. In her freshness, she had not that tender and soft brilliancy with which beauty is painted, when it is compared with the rose; but the lively red, the down, and roundness of the peach, afford you an image that very much resembles her. As for wit with so sweet a mouth, could she be without it? Her eyes and her smile would alone have given wit and grace to her simplest language; aud, from her lips, good-day, and good-night, seemed so me exquisitely engaging. She might be one or two years older than I; and this inequality of age, rendered still more imposing by an air of steadiness and prudence, intimidated my dawning love: but by degrees, in trying to make my attentions please her, I perceived that I succeeded, and, from the moment I thought I had won her heart, I loved her in good earnest. I made her a plain avowel of it, and she as plainly answered me, that her inclinations were not at variance with mine. "But you well know," said she to me, "that, to be lovers, we must hope one day to be married; and how can we expect it at our age? You are scarcely fifteen: and are not you going to pursue your studies?"..."Yes," said I to her, "such is my determination, and such is the wish of my mother."..."Well then! here will be five years of absence before you can be fixed in life, and I shall be more than twenty, without knowing for what you are destined."..."Alas! it is too true," said I to her, "that I know not what will beoome of me; but promise me at least, never to marry without consulting my mother, nor without asking

her wrether I have not some hope to offer you." She gave me her promise with a charming smile, and during the rest of the vacation, we abandoned ourselves to the pleasure of loving each other, with the ingenuousnes and the innocence of our age. Our private walks, our most interesting conversations, were passed in imagining for me, possibilities of future success or fortune, that might favour our wishes, but, as these sweet illusions succeeded each other like dreams, the one effaced the other, and, after they had delighted us for a moment, we finished by weeping over them, as children weep when a breath overturns the house of cards they have built.'

No. 11...CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION OF A SYLPH.

Castigat ridendo mores.

You must not believe that when the transient breath of woman has fled that all her vanities have at once forsaken her..... Oh ! no.....when the fair expire in all their pride their souls return to their first elements. The sprites of fiery termagants, mount up in flame, and beceme salamanders. Soft yielding minds, glide away amongst the nymphs of the fountains and sip with them their elemental tea. The formal prude sinks down into a gnome, and is still busy in the pursuit of mischief. But the light coquette, transformed into a gay and frolicksome Sylph, repairs aloft into the fields of air,where sporting and fluttering amidst the Zephyrs, she endeavours to console herself for the misfortune of being no longer *seen,* in suffering nothing to escape her *unseen.**

All Sylphs therefore having been once enclosed *in the lovely form of woman,* and retaining, notwithstanding their metamorphose, some of those inclinations which constituted their happiness, when they animated these *charming terrestial vehicles,* it may be supposed, that they are no less inimical to dull monotony, than eager for variety, even let us add of connual change. And why should we blush to confess it. If it is true,as the French poet has elegantly said, that

"Ennui was one day born of Uniformity."

Certainly then no one will be surprised that I hasten to congratulate my ancient confidante,upon the happy inspiration tha

* This sentence is an almost literal imitation of the account of th Sylphs in the Rape of the Lock.

has prompted him to change his tone and assume a little character ; because, although we love our friends, however antiquated may be their costume, however negligent their attire, yet we prefer seeing them arrayed with taste and in the fashion of the day, when they appear in public.

I am not less eager to offer my felicitations to the OBSERVER, and I hope under the new name by which you have announced yourself, you will not be quite so EASY as your philanthropic predecessor.

And how in fact would it be possible, to be an *Observer,* and yet wear a perpetually unruffled mein ! no indeed, this would be impracticable ; when we consider that at all times, but at this period more than ever,the earth exhibits a theatre of crimes and follies, cruelties and meannesses ; ignorance and presumption ; impertinence, infamy and injustice ; in short a continual spectacle of all that can revolt the understanding, disgust the mind, and wound every feeling of the soul, I repeat, who cuold be an *observer* without being sometimes a misanthrope, and consequently, now and then a little caustic.

Will any object to this causticity ? we will pity them : for it can be but weak and debilitated characters who, like invalids with feeble stomachs, can bear nothing of high flavour. Poor beings, doubtless their weakness excites compassion, but their regimen cannot be adapted to any one in good health.

Ah ! no, dear Observer—let us leave in peace these *drinkers of barley-water and chicken broth,* and let us remember that a little bile is necessary to health ; let us remember that the epithet of *good* is often equivalent to *contempt,* and that it emboldens persons to offer insult ; let us in short remember, that opposition is preferable to *Ennui,* and that general opinion will always agree with the peevish Roman, who exclaimed one day, (wearied with hearing himself unceasingly applauded by a flatterer with whom he was tete-a-tete for once say NO, *that we may feel ourselves to be two persons.*

M. A.

POLITICAL.

The public attention seems to have been awakened, and with reason, by the infamous execution of *Palm,* of Meremberg and Schoderer, who was accused with him.

If any thing can increase the indignation which such acts of oppression must excite,assuredly it is that we find amongst the reasons given for the sentence which these unhappy victims, and the four persons accused with them, unheard, received, that they were *condemned to death* for endeavouring to prompt the people to fail in the *respect due to crowned heads ! ! !*

Inded we can scarcely credit the testimony of our senses, when we reflect, that but a moment, as it were, has elapsed,

since the authors of these condemnations, put to death indiscriminately all who were *suspected* of being favourable to royalty ; and that these very men, while they pretended to be republicans and assumed the surnames of Brutus, Porsenna, &c. &c. would have massacred all those who would not take an oath of eternal hatred to royalty ! ! ! G.

Original Poetry.

For the Observer.

TO LAURA.

O ! say were not the moments sweet,
When, Laura, by the stream we stray'd ;
Or, when we sought the cool retreat,
Or wander'd down the flow'ry glade ?

There, borne on Zephyr's silken wing,
Came earliest vi'let's sweet perfume :
While Hebe smil'd a lovelier spring,
And love laugh'd on thy cheek of bloom.

What then, were all the world to me !
Its scorns, its smiles, or boasted charms !
Its fairest pride I found in thee,
Its dearest bliss, in Laura's arms.

But now, lov'd Laura ! but now no more,
Together, by the stream we stray ;
Alas ! those hours of joy are o'er,
And all our flattering dreams decay.

Then fare thee well, since fate's degree,
Compels our kindred souls to part---
Yet still, lov'd Laura !---still to thee,
Belongs this fond—this doating heart !

And still, along thy banks, sweet stream !
At ev'ning hour I'll often rove ;
There, fondly, on past joys to dream,
And sigh the name of her I love. FREDERICK.

In the Sabbath, a Poem by Mr. Grahame of Edinburgh, we have met with some of the most exquisite poetic beauties, that have for a long time struck our imagination...the following original and appropriate similie, we have never before found in any poet : it occurs in the delineation of a female character, "the Poor Man's Friend," mild in her disposition and resigned to the will of her heavenly Father.

——————Those eyes are clos'd :
Yet all their loveliness is not yet flown :
She smil'd in death, and still her cold pale face
Retains that smile ; as when a waveless lake,
In which the wintry stars all bright appear,
Is sheeted by a nightly frost with ice,
Still it reflects the face of heaven unchang d,
Unruffled by the breeze or sweeping blast.